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IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 5 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government and with reference to my letter dated 18 July 1996 (S/1996/578), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 3 August 1996 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Identical letters dated 3 August 1996 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I should like to refer to my letter of 17 July 1996 concerning the latest Turkish attacks on the territory of the Republic of Iraq (S/1996/578, annex) and to inform you that Turkish forces are still engaged in military operations inside Iraq's territory and airspace on the pretext of being in pursuit of elements belonging to the Kurdish Workers' Party. On 10 July 1996 the following incidents occurred:

1. Turkish warplanes bombarded the Buse area of northern Iraq, injuring seven persons, setting fire to 15 homes and killing some livestock.

2. Turkish warplanes, carrying out 15 sorties, bombarded Butah camp in the mountains in the northern region of Iraq.

The Government of Iraq rejects outright the justifications advanced by Turkey and condemns the Turkish incursions as constituting a flagrant and serious violation of Iraq's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity. It calls for an immediate halt to these attacks in order to avert any deterioration in the situation between the two countries and prevent damage to Iraqi citizens that is incompatible with relations of good-neighbourliness, the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the 1926 Iraq-Turkey boundary agreement. The attacks create an alarming situation not only for Iraq but also for Turkey and for the region as a whole, which is primarily suffering from the anomalous situation brought about by the Americans and their allies in northern Iraq.

Iraq has on many occasions in the past alerted its neighbour Turkey to the consequences of allowing those circumstances to persist that prolong the anomalous situation in northern Iraq. The experience of the past five years - since 1991 - has demonstrated in a manner that leaves no room for doubt that the requirement to allow the forces involved in the so-called "Operation Poised Hammer" to remain in Turkish territory on various pretexts has been no more than a cover for aggression against Iraq and interference in its internal affairs.

Iraq calls attention to the fact that it has in the past frequently assured its Turkish neighbour that addressing the relevant problems will require it to cooperate and coordinate its action directly with Iraq in order to bring an end to the situation in question, since it has become clear that its perpetuation can only cause further difficulties and further destruction for Turkey and for the region, just as for Iraq itself.

The Government of Iraq reserves its right to seek compensation for the damage caused by these Turkish violations of its territory and airspace, and it renews its call to the Government of Turkey to reconsider its policies with respect to the situation in northern Iraq and to promote the cooperation of the two countries on the basis of the same considerations of good-neighbourliness

and mutual respect for sovereignty to which Iraq is committed. It will thus be possible to eliminate the reasons for the persistence of a situation that jeopardizes the interests of both countries and the realization of their desire to establish security and stability in the region and fulfil the aspirations of the two peoples for prosperity and progress.

While reiterating my country's appeal to its Turkish neighbour, through you, to respect the sovereignty of Iraq and the inviolability of its territory, I hope that the Security Council will meet the responsibilities entrusted to it under the Charter of the United Nations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security and that it will prevent any continuance of the intimidation and aggression to which my country is constantly being subjected.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq